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# Singapore Management University receives Friend of the Arts Award

Singapore Management University

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Singapore Management University receives Friend of the Arts Award**

*Singapore, 2 October 2007* - Singapore Management University (SMU) is proud to be the first autonomous university in Singapore to be recognized for its contributions to the development of Singapore's arts scene. SMU received the Friend of the Arts award from Dr Lee Boon Yang, Minister for Information, Communications and the Arts, at the Patron of the Arts Awards Ceremony today.

"SMU firmly believes in the value of the arts in enriching and enlivening the campus experience for students, staff, faculty members and the people who pass through the university everyday. With an open, accessible and state-of-the-art city campus located at the heart of the bustling business, civic and cultural district, SMU warmly welcomes artists and arts groups to use our campus to reach out to our community and the general public. We also actively work with them and initiated a number of arts programmes to fill every corner of the campus with the arts throughout the year," says Professor Howard Hunter, President of SMU.

Among SMU's main arts contribution made in 2006 was as venue sponsor for the inaugural Singapore Biennale from 4 October to 12 November 2006. SMU Campus Green served as the 'nerve centre' for the Biennale, housing its Information Centre, Media Centre and Gift Shop, designed by award-winning Japanese architect Shigeru Ban. Thousands of people visited the Centre to view its design, meet Biennale artists and pick up information and memorabilia on the Biennale.

Another key SMU initiative in support for the arts was the launch of our Visual Arts Initiative (VAI) in January 2006. Through the VAI, SMU develops and hosts exhibitions and enrichment programmes, while building an institutional collection of contemporary art, with Southeast Asian art as the principal focus. In conjunction with the VAI launch, SMU also programmed Artery, its inaugural exhibition showcasing works and installations by 11 artists from Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, USA and Australia. The exhibition drew over 5000 visitors to works by the late Anthony Poon, Chua Ek Kay, Pinaree Sanpitak, Delia Prvacki, Tang Dawu, Francis Ng and Dadang Christanto from January 12 to March 31 2006.

Other contributions to the arts in 2006 include venue sponsorship for exhibitions by master watercolorist Ong Kim Seng and his students, the Embassy of Ukraine, French Embassy and EADS, and the Tangent Group. For 2007, SMU

has published and launch the first-ever monograph on Chua Ek Kay's Singapore Street Scenes series, and also staged an exhibition of his Street Scenes works which he donated to SMU in October 2006. The university also launched the new SMU\*U-Square Concerts series which presented leading local artists and arts groups in evening performances at its open and accessible University Square.